

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 02001 111254Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12  
OMB-01 SSM-05 IO-14 /087 W  
-----081076 120031Z /65

R 110509Z APR 78

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7563  
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
USINT BAGHDAD  
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
USICA WASHDC

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 2001

E.O. 11652: NA  
TAGS: SOPN, SY, US, XF  
SUBJECT: SYRIAN MEDIA SCORES US MIDEAST POLICY AS EMBODIED IN  
ATHERTON'S SPEECH

1. EDITORIALS IN SYRIAN PRESS APRIL 10 FOCUS ON "ANTI-ARAB"  
POLICY OF US AND WAX CRITICAL OF ATHERTON'S ATLANTA SPEECH.  
AL-BAATH IN LEAD EDITORIAL COMPLAINS THAT ARAB LEADERS BY  
EQUIVOCATING ON SADAT'S JERUSALEM INITIATIVES ENCOURAGED  
THE US TO ACCELERATE ITS "ANTI-ARAB" POLICIES. COLUMN  
POINTS TO ISRAEL'S FAILURE, AS YET, TO WITHDRAW ITS FORCES  
FROM LEBANON AS PROOF THAT THE US LACKS THE WILL TO  
"PRESSURE" ISRAEL ALTHOUGH UNSC 425 "IS AN AMERICAN RESOLUTION."  
COLUMN ASSERTS THAT IF THE ARABS REMAIN DIVIDED THEY WILL  
LOSE WORLD SUPPORT FOR THEIR CAUSE.

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2. HOWEVER, THESE CALLS FOR SOLIDARITY APPARENTLY ARE  
NOT MEANT TO SIGNAL SYRIA'S RELAXATION OF OPPOSITION TO ATTENDING  
AN ARAB SUMMIT SO LONG AS SADAT MAINTAINS HIS CURRENT POLICIES.  
AL-BAATH COLUMN CALLS UPON THE ARABS TO TOPPLE SADAT'S  
INITIATIVES "AND ALL ITS RESULTS" AS A PRELUDE TO  
ARAB SOLIDARITY.

3. A SECOND AL-BAATH COLUMN LARGELY ECHOES THE FOREGOING BY IMPLICITLY CRITICIZING CALLS FOR AN ARAB SUMMIT NOW AND SCORNING SADAT'S "RELUCTANT ACCEPTANCE" TO ATTEND SUCH A CONFERENCE. CALLS FOR SUCH A CONFERENCE AT THIS TIME ARE SEEMINGLY LINKED TO ATHERTON'S ATLANTA SPEECH WHICH IS CHARACTERIZED AS EXPRESSING AMERICA'S DESIRE TO RENDER THE ARABS INCAPABLE OF MAKING INDEPENDENT DECISIONS AND TO PREVENT ARAB SOLIDARITY. AN EDITORIAL IN TISHRIIN ALSO IS PARTIALLY FOCUSED ON ATHERTON'S SPEECH; CLAIMING THAT BY DENYING THE NECESSITY FOR FULL ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORY AMERICA IS CONDONING ISRAEL'S "RIGHT TO ANNEX OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES." TISHRIIN COLUMN ALSO CRITICIZES THE SPEECH FOR DENYING THE PALESTINIANS THEIR RIGHT TO A STATE WHILE CALLING UPON THEM TO LIVE IN PEACE WITH ISRAEL.

4. TISHRIIN EDITORIAL CONCLUDES BY NOTING THAT THE ARABS CAN EITHER LEAVE THE INITIATIVE WITH THE US AND ISRAEL, THEREBY RISKING A NEW FLARE-UP IN THE REGION OR ATTEMPT TO MAKE PROGRESS THROUGH THE UN (WALDHEIM'S INITIATIVE? "TO REVIVE THE PROCESS OF GENUINE PEACE."

PELLETREAU

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, SPEECHES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** SOPN, SY, US, XF, (ATHERTON, ALFRED L JR)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014